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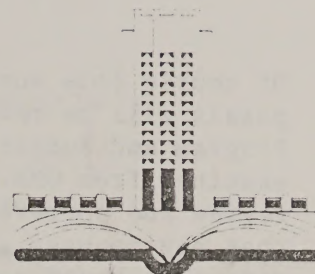
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SCIENCE AND EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

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June 30, 1980

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TIS NEWS NOTES

COMMUNICATIONS TO TIS STAFF

PROCUREMENT SECTION
CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

News of wide interest to TIS staff should be brought to the attention of all by means of these News Notes, which are being sent to all members of COSTIS, the Council of Supervisors of TIS, and to staff members with special assignments.

Trip and meeting reports, progress reports extracted from Division monthly reports, and other items of broad interest should be forwarded to Gene Farkas. Gene welcomes potential contributions from all staff members.

Monthly reports from Divisions are due on the seventh working day of each month. Files are maintained in Sam Waters' office. Let Jo Andy know if you want to borrow them briefly for your perusal.

AGNET

A few days after Mt. St. Helens exploded, we received a rush call from SEA headquarters asking us what we knew about "AGNET." Dr. Farley knew it was an Extension information network, so we got in touch with Jerry Paulsen, who had all the answers. When he called back to SEA, it turned out that the Secretary of Agriculture wanted to use the system to obtain information about the impact of the volcanic activity on agriculture. A computer terminal was placed in the Secretary's office, assigned the ID of AGNET 1, and the network has been in daily use since then. We're happy to have helped steer the Secretary to the right place.

FY 82 BUDGET

Preliminary work on the Fiscal 82 budget is approaching the early moments of decision. Requests for increases are being prepared in terms of matters of special concern of SEA, for which Special Analyses are being done by teams from the different organizational components of SEA. Some of our staff members have been assigned to work on certain of those teams to prepare special analyses in areas with which TIS seem to have a clear interest. As a result of the work of these team members and the interest of SEA Administration at the highest level, TIS increases are now being requested in connection with the following areas: Aquaculture, IPM, Tropical Agricultural Research, Human Nutrition, Animal Health, Energy, Organic Farming, Consumer Education Centers, Higher Education, and Increased Operating Costs. Our thanks go to all those in TIS who have served on the teams and who have helped prepare proposals in connection with these areas. Phil Dopkowski has worked (and is still working) long and hard at the thankless task of pulling these materials together in the form required by the Program Planning Staff of JP & E. Jo Andy has had the pleasure(?) of typing and/or retyping much of it. Special thanks to them.

Of course this work is only the first step in a long budget pathway. Proposals will be reviewed by the SEA Management Team and later by the USDA Program and Budget Review Board, after which they will be analyzed by an examiner from OMB. If they clear the Executive Branch they remain subject to review and approval by both Houses of Congress. Sometimes it seems a miracle that any request could survive so many critical scrutinies. It is also the case that broad problems of government, such as the state of the economy, often affect final determinations more than the quality of the proposal. It is clear that we can't bank on any request for increase being approved. Nevertheless, I have never before seen so much support for TIS activities from our research, extension and education colleagues, both in the special analysis teams and at higher headquarters. We are evidently meeting important information needs and convincing others that we can do more if given a chance. Keep up the good work.

INNOVATIVE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COORDINATING GROUP

Late in April Sam Waters sent a note to Senior Staff pointing out that "A number of people (Tate, Paulsen, Hoyt et al.) are currently engaged in a variety of developmental activities for library and information systems. I believe a coordinating group should be established to enhance communication about these innovative activities. I would appreciate receiving your nominations to such a group." Since then the group comprised of Jerry Paulsen, Tom Tate, Chet Swank, David Hoyt, and Sam Waters has met twice. A draft statement of its objectives follows: "to encourage the development of expertise and information technologies among TIS personnel; to exchange information among TIS staff and all potential users, data producers and systems designers about the new technologies; to educate and inform TIS staff and others about systems capabilities, to advocate changes and improvements in information technology applications; and to promote the use of new technologies throughout SEA and USDA."

The group hopes to develop an organization with broader representation from within TIS, and to establish a communications network with other USDA information professionals, including those in current information and ADP work. It hopes to engage in development of seminars for USDA information professionals and management, with demonstrations, state-of-the-art reports, and perhaps panels on possible SEA and USDA applications of the new technology. This would cover such areas as direct delivery of computerized information to the farm and home, video disk, electronic mail, teleconferencing, paperless office, full text data bases etc. In addition to presenting seminars, the group hopes to develop proposals requesting funding to acquire, demonstrate, and create pilot projects using advanced information technology. They also hope to develop small-scale pilot projects without formal funding.

UNION AT TIS DECERTIFIED

The Federal Labor Relations Authority has officially certified the results of the election held June 5 at the NAL Building and at DC Branch. Local 3147 of

the American Federation of Government Employees will no longer be the exclusive representative of TIS employees.

COSTIS MEMBERSHIP EXPANDED

Effective immediately, the membership of COSTIS is being enlarged to include all non-supervisory TIS employees at GS-12 and above, as well as all supervisory employees.

FWP COORDINATOR

Effective July 1, 1980 I have appointed Iris Irby for a two year term as the SEA/TIS Federal Womens Program Coordinator. Irby was responsible for the excellent program for Black History Week. She has some good ideas to stimulate interest in the Womens Program. I know you will give her full cooperation.

EDITORSHIP OF QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF IAALD

With the issue now in press Bob Butler and I will complete our work with the Quarterly Bulletin. The new editor is Miss Valerie Howe BSc (Zool) presently plant pathology editor of the journal Tropical Pest Management. Much of the real work on the QB was done by Butler and his staff. Because of his diligent attention to this extra task we can point with pride to our piece of the international agricultural library/information world. I will continue to be Associate Editor (USA) for the QB.

SEA MISSION STATEMENT

We are working on the second draft of the statement. (Division Chiefs have copies.) The TIS role is clearly defined in this draft. There is still time for changes. I want to thank all of you for your input. I have saved your suggestions and will use them as we develop the TIS mission statement.

R.A.F.

RICHARD A. FARLEY
Administrator

